

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. THOMAS H. ALLEN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, on July 29, 2008, I was unavoidably absent from the House.

If I had been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 534, a motion by Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2490, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a pilot program for the mobile biometric identification in the maritime environment of aliens unlawfully attempting to enter the United States, as amended.

I would have also voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 535, a motion by Mr. DAVIS of Illinois to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6113, a bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to require each agency to include a contact telephone number in its collection of information in order to assist people with filling out government forms.

Finally, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 536, a motion by Mr. HARE of Illinois to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2192, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an Ombudsman within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I ask unanimous consent that this statement be inserted in the appropriate place in the RECORD.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 531 on H.R. 5501, I mistakenly recorded my vote as "no" when I should have voted "yes." I ask unanimous consent that my statement appear in the RECORD immediately following rollcall vote No. 531.

MIDDLE CLASS TAX FAIRNESS
ACT**HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker last week, I introduced legislation that will allow tens of millions of middle class taxpayers to keep more of their hard earned dollars. My Middle Class Tax Fairness Act will help Americans who are being squeezed by high gas prices, high grocery prices, the high cost of health care, and the high cost of college tuition.

It is unfair that hard-working Americans go to work every day and pay their taxes while corporations and the wealthy exploit loopholes in our tax code to avoid paying their fair share. That's not right—our tax system should be fair all around.

People's paychecks are not keeping pace with rising costs. In fact, the average household income is about \$800 less than it was just 5 years ago, while the price of gas has doubled in that same amount of time. All across southern Minnesota, people tell me of the challenges that they face in our weakening economy: choosing between medication or basic groceries because their paycheck doesn't accommodate both, or dipping into their savings accounts just to help pay for a tank of gas.

Meanwhile, our tax code is full of government waste and unnecessary give-aways to big corporations. Oil companies will receive an estimated \$13 billion in subsidies over the next 10 years, despite the fact that they are posting record-breaking profits. Foreign corporations that operate in the United States set up dummy headquarters in tax haven countries to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. But middle class Americans sure aren't getting those kinds of breaks.

It's time for a change. It's time to put hard-working families first. My Middle Class Tax Fairness Act will repeal these unnecessary and wasteful subsidies and close these tax loopholes. It provides a real tax break for middle class families by doubling the standard de-

duction for taxpayers for the next two years. This will provide an average tax cut of \$750 for 61 million taxpayers this year alone.

My legislation will also expand access to the Child Tax Credit, helping an estimated 13 million children who will either become newly eligible or receive increased benefits from the tax credit.

The Middle Class Tax Fairness Act will also help offset the rising cost of property taxes for millions of Americans by allowing taxpayers who take the standard deduction to lower their taxable income by taking their property taxes into account. This will benefit more than 32 million homeowners in the United States who did not receive a property tax deduction on their taxes.

Finally, my legislation will help pay down nearly \$60 billion of our national debt, to help address the fiscal mismanagement that has contributed to our stagnating economy.

A few days ago, I talked to a young woman in Rochester, Minnesota named Nicole. She's 29 years old and commutes twenty miles to work every day to her job as a legal assistant. Nicole and I estimated that under my proposed legislation, she would save \$832 on her 2008 taxes.

I also met with another couple, Diane and John. They have a six year-old daughter and recently purchased their own home. We figured that my Middle Class Tax Fairness Act would allow them to take advantage of the new property tax standard deduction and save them more than \$1,280 on their 2008 taxes.

These numbers may not be the billions of dollars that oil companies and foreign multinationals are used to saving on their taxes, but they represent real help for tens of millions of middle class Americans who are struggling to get by.

It's the easiest thing in the world for a politician to promise someone a tax cut. But it's much harder to do it in a fiscally responsible way that is paid for. My legislation does just that, and I urge my colleagues to help me in the effort by cosponsoring my Middle Class Tax Fairness Act.